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Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 22 October 1991, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. SHIHABI (Saudi Arabia)

later: Mr. Pennaneach (Togo)
(Vice-President)

- Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency [14] (continued)

  (a) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Agency

  (b) Draft resolution

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 14 (continued)

REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY:

(a) NOTE BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TRANSMITTING THE REPORT OF THE AGENCY (A/46/353)

(b) DRAFT RESOLUTION (A/46/L.10)

Mr. MONTAÑO (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): As in previous years, my delegation would like to put on record our thanks to Mr. Hans Blix, the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), for his detailed account of the activities of the Agency. The annual report of IAEA and the statement by Mr. Blix demonstrate the high degree of professionalism and devotion with which the Agency's administration is discharging the important responsibilities entrusted to it by its member States.

At a time when the Agency has been called upon to perform functions that are of the highest importance to international peace and security, we must emphasize our recognition of the work that, with limited resources, the Agency has carried out. This demonstrates the Agency's effectiveness and gives rise to concern about the allocation of human and financial resources to ensure that it is able fully to discharge its mandate and fulfil its objectives. We remain firmly committed to providing adequate finance for the Agency and to strengthening its programmes, which are matters of universal concern.

It seems premature at this stage to draw up a balance sheet of the lessons learned from the conflict in the Persian Gulf with regard to the information that has been obtained about the nuclear capacity of Iraq. However, in compliance with the mandate that flowed from Security Council resolutions 687 (1991) and 707 (1991), the Agency has had to do unparalleled

(Mr. Montaño, Mexico)

work, revealing hitherto-unknown aspects of the scope and limits of the safeguards system. The information that has been gained about failure to comply with the obligations undertaken by a State signatory to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is cause for concern, and calls for calm and well-balanced thought about the best way to avoid a repetition.

(Mr. Montaño, Mexico)

There cannot be the slightest doubt that it has been possible to evade the safeguards system of the non-proliferation Treaty (NPT), whose application is entrusted to IAEA. It is possible that we are not dealing with only one case, and this is cause for deep concern.

My country has stated repeatedly in the past, and does so again, that we must strengthen the system, with due regard for the differences in the financing capacities and nuclear installations of the developed and the developing countries. We believe we must continue to expand the safeguards system in order to achieve a more transparent, universal system.

Mexico considers, however, that an effective safeguards system requires committed action on the part of the international community as a whole, without exception. While it is true that one State has violated its responsibilities under international law, we must admit that, in political circumstances unlike those prevailing today, there was an extremely tolerant attitude towards the supply of resources and infrastructure that made it possible for this violation to occur.

Let there be no doubt: there are no reasons that can justify the infractions committed. But my delegation wishes to emphasize that we must seek mechanisms to strengthen the safeguards system. Let us accept the urgent need to review carefully the actions and obligations that we all share regarding international security. In other cases, the United Nations has recognized the wisdom of international cooperation in fighting problems that affect all of us. In this case, too, we must seek joint solutions that involve the commitment of all Member States.

(Mr. Montaño, Mexico)

At the same time, my delegation does not believe that, in trying to strengthen the safeguards system, we should take hasty action that weakens the sovereign rights of States. We must remember that what happened in Iraq was an extraordinary case that forced the intervention of the Security Council. That experience showed that we could make an exceptional response to an exceptional occurrence. However, we should not try to subordinate the normal, regular actions of the IAEA to special procedures, such as those used in the case of Iraq, which was the exception to the rule. The IAEA safeguards system is a response to normal needs, as stipulated in the non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) and in agreements between countries and IAEA. We should adhere to this system. As in other cases that have proved responsive to joint action, we can find a satisfactory balance between our need for greater security and respect for the domestic jurisdiction of States.

On the other hand, Mexico considers that any effort to strengthen the safeguards system of the Agency should not prejudice its other activities. Thus, due account must be taken of the necessary balance between the major activities of the Agency. In particular, my delegation holds firmly to its position that we should not reduce available resources for technical assistance and cooperation; these are fundamental activities of the Agency and are of the utmost importance and necessity for the developing countries.

As we have pointed out in the past, security and development go hand in hand. They can have no separate existence. Without a doubt, one of the lessons to be learned from the Agency's activities in recent months, by mandate of the Security Council, is that we must promote more decisively the programmes designed for peaceful applications of nuclear technology. The

(Mr. Montaño, Mexico)

contribution that the Agency can make to the development of our countries is essential and should not be reduced for any reason whatsoever. It bears repeating that such a reduction would only undermine the Agency's contribution towards the security of our States.

The Agency, as can be seen from its report, continues to make a fundamental contribution in matters of food and agriculture, health and medicine and industrial and scientific development; and it also inspires the confidence needed for the utilization of the atom as a source of energy.

We maintain that the Agency's programmes of technical cooperation should be expanded and strengthened. This would help to consolidate a more stable, more secure international order within the framework of shared development. This is an area that calls for greater resources and it could very well benefit from the recent positive developments that we have seen in disarmament.

The Agency is called upon to play a central role in the establishment of a more secure, peaceful, stable international society. We must ensure that, as it assumes additional responsibilities, we do not lose sight of fundamental objectives such as the promotion of the peaceful, constructive use of nuclear energy. The Agency must keep apart from political debates and circumstantial considerations. Its objective and responsible work must not be compromised. Its mandate must maintain the balance that has been the source of the support and confidence it receives from all States. We are sure that all States share this view and that it will be able to live up to our expectations and the requirements of the new international situation.

Mr. KARHILO (Finland): My delegation wishes to congratulate the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and his staff on outstanding work during the past year. New vistas have been opened for the Agency's work. In the Director General's words, the central task of the Agency has always been to contribute to the taming of nuclear power. My Government sees this task as two-fold: to enhance confidence in nuclear non-proliferation arrangements, particularly the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, through safeguards; and to promote the safety of nuclear power generation.

It is no longer appropriate to assume that an intergovernmental organization should promote the use of any given technology as such. In the case of the Agency the best way to ensure a future for the peaceful use of nuclear energy is to make it generally accepted as environmentally safe. The technical cooperation role of any organization should be derived from its fundamental objectives.

The Helsinki Senior Expert Symposium on Electricity and the Environment last May concluded, among other things, that nuclear power is the most likely non-fossil source which can be deployed on a large scale and with costs competitive with fossil fuels for base-load generation. This is the very reason why we need IAEA, with its two main functions: safeguards and safety.

The Director General has on a number of occasions expressed his conviction that the present safeguards system should be revised. He did so most recently yesterday. We support fully the proposals made in his statement. Indeed, the Agency's inspections in Iraq under Security Council resolution 687 (1991) have brought to light facts that raise questions about

(Mr. Karhilo, Finland)

the very foundations of the Agency's current safeguards system. Iraq's clandestine pursuit of nuclear weapons, in brazen contravention of its Treaty obligations, is a challenge to IAEA which it must not fail to meet.

We note with appreciation the work that IAEA, in cooperation with the United Nations Special Commission, has already done in uncovering Iraq's non-compliance with its nuclear non-proliferation commitments. It is in recognition of that role that Finland has joined in sponsoring this year's draft resolution on the report of IAEA. In this context it is important to stress once again that the conclusion of a safeguards agreement is a legal - and unconditional - obligation under the non-proliferation Treaty. Acceptance of safeguards should not be made conditional on the handling of extraneous issues.

Finland supports the working out of a binding framework convention on nuclear safety as a necessary step forward for the continued use of nuclear energy. The Director General referred to recent studies by the Agency that have revealed serious safety risks in a number of nuclear power plants. The Agency has done valuable work in connection with the WWER 440/230-type reactors. We hope that similar efforts will be undertaken with regard to the RBMK-type reactors. Because of its geographical proximity to installations with this type of technology, Finland has a particular interest in their safety.

The transfer of nuclear techniques for development has often been mentioned as the third important task of IAEA. The Agency's technical cooperation programme is indeed valuable. Because of the complexity of the use of nuclear energy, however, the major part of the Agency's technical cooperation projects have focused on non-energy activities or equipment. In

(Mr. Karhilo, Finland)

our view the Agency's technical cooperation programme should be more closely linked to its primary field of competence.

The International Atomic Energy Agency has a special role within the United Nations family; its objectives are related to one technology only. This technology is applied in a number of areas which fall within the competence of other intergovernmental organizations. Continued close cooperation is necessary in order to introduce the right technology in the right context within the framework of the overall needs of the recipient country.

Mr. ERDOS (Hungary): The Hungarian delegation listened with interest to the excellent introductory statement by the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Mr. Hans Blix, and also has studied attentively the annual report of the Agency for 1990. I wish to express our appreciation of the report, and our satisfaction with the Agency's activities. It gives me pleasure to congratulate the Director General and through him the highly motivated staff of IAEA on the exemplary, and if need be, self-sacrificing work they have undertaken to meet fully the extraordinary challenges of the last year.

In the course of the year that has elapsed since the previous report was discussed here, dramatic changes and developments have taken place in the world which have a direct bearing upon the Agency. For the first time the Security Council of the United Nations established that a party had violated the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty. The conclusion was based on the evidence discovered by a series of special inspection missions of IAEA in cooperation with the Special Commission of the Security Council.

(Mr. Erdos, Hungary)

The violations of Treaty obligations, however, did not cease even after the unanimous adoption of the relevant resolutions, in particular Security Council resolution 707 (1991). In view of this fact, and aware of the unusual circumstances that characterize the monitoring missions, we wish to pay a tribute to the Director General of IAEA and to the members of the special inspection teams for having conducted in a highly competent and skilful manner the extremely sensitive and complex tasks entrusted to them by the Security Council.

In its recent resolution 715 (1991) the Security Council approved detailed plans for future ongoing monitoring and verification of Iraq's compliance with relevant parts of previous resolutions and requested further contributions from the Agency. The Hungarian delegation feels assured that IAEA for its part will not fail to live up to the expectations of the world community as expressed by the Security Council and will carry out its tasks in an effective manner in order to help prevent any possible revival of the clandestine programme. We are in full accord with all the stipulations of the resolution, including those relating to financial implications.

(Mr. Erdos, Hungary)

The Iraqi violation of its safeguards agreement has revealed the need to take urgent measures aimed at strengthening the Agency's safeguards system as a whole. This need has also been expressed by others, and we fully share the view that now it is the future credibility of the Agency which is at stake. IAEA should be able to adapt itself to the fundamental changes of last year and to the new requirements stemming from them. In this context we associate ourselves with delegations such as those of the European Community that suggest that a set of measures should be implemented without any delay. Most of all, we support - as, in fact, we already supported, long before the Gulf war - proposals concerning a more precise drafting of procedures to invoke special inspections in the event of doubt arising regarding full compliance with obligations undertaken in safeguards agreements with the Agency. Hungarian delegations in Vienna have more than once explained our understanding and our interpretation of this matter, and have also expressed our readiness to participate in this process.

During the past year, dramatic events and unprecedented developments have characterized our world. It is, therefore, a source of real satisfaction that, in spite of all that turmoil, we can note significant advances in the field of nuclear disarmament. In addition to specific measures such as the Strategic Arms Reduction (START) agreement between the Soviet Union and the United States and the announcement of a whole set of major steps by the same countries, a number of other States have also contributed towards the universality of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We welcome the announcement by France and China of their wish to accede to the Treaty. This prospect in itself is already having a beneficial effect upon

(Mr. Erdos, Hungary)

the discussions concerning possible ways and means of strengthening the safeguards regime.

We are also glad to note that a number of States in southern Africa have signed the non-proliferation Treaty, and wish to call again on those States that have not yet done so to follow suit. Hungarian delegations at various forums have repeatedly expressed the view that all States parties to the Treaty should fully implement all the obligations undertaken through their adherence to it. One of the most important obligations for signatories is the conclusion - including also undelayed ratification - and unconditional implementation of safeguards agreements, as was rightly emphasized by the Board of Governors of the Agency in a resolution adopted in September.

Bearing in mind all the challenges to and opportunities for the non-proliferation regime, the Agency should carefully consider the numerous proposals that have been advanced about the necessary short-, medium- and long-term actions to adjust the existing safeguards regime. If it does so with renewed vigour and determination, the Agency could play a vital role and ensure that the historic opportunity is not lost.

In our view, the very concept of the whole safeguards approach ought to be re-examined on a long-term basis with an eye on the future beyond 1995. Those who are involved in the maintenance and improvement of the present practice know very well that even the smallest correction to the regime is a really complex and difficult task. The case of Iraq has proved that there is a need to look into the long-term possibilities for adjustment of the present safeguards approach, including criteria, methods and procedures. Such a mighty project could be undertaken by the Agency only in close cooperation

(Mr. Erdos, Hungary)

with experts from member States. Hungary strongly supports the project and is ready to take part in it.

The fundamental changes of the last two years have created a watershed for IAEA, for the whole non-proliferation regime and also for the safeguards system of the Agency, which is one of the pillars of that regime. For the 1995 extension conference of the non-proliferation Treaty to be a real success, action must be started at the Agency as of today. Let me emphasize here that Hungary is ready to make all the necessary efforts to facilitate the establishment - in the medium term, at the appropriate time, directly under the Director General - of a more intrusive, independent inspection capability, starting with the collection and assessment of safeguards-related information originating from the Governments of member States.

In this context, the shocking experiences of the Agency's special inspection teams in Iraq underscore the urgent need to restore, and without much delay, confidence in the effectiveness and efficiency of the Agency's safeguards regime. The essential national security interests of countries such as mine urgently demand the establishment of a new, more penetrating international inspection and verification regime. Consequently, we strongly support every effort to strengthen, by such means, the force of deterrence against any clandestine activities by States in breach of their international obligations.

On a short-term basis, it is now timely for the policy-making organs of IAEA to consider, preferably at their next meeting, in December, and then decide - hopefully, in February - the specific ways in which special inspections are to be carried out. We feel that this is the issue which is

(Mr. Erdos, Hungary)

the ripest for action in the shortest time. Let us hope the opportunity will not vanish. We should be aware that the work of the Board of Governors can be successful only if the relevant proposals and documents are prepared and distributed among member States by the beginning of November at the latest.

Turning now to the subject of an international safety convention - another crucially important issue for the Agency - I wish to express our support for the idea of a framework convention, as was proposed recently at the international nuclear safety Conference in Vienna. Again, we hope the Secretariat will be able to prepare an outline for such an instrument and offer suggestions as to subjects that might be covered.

We agree that the commitment of the parties to such a convention may invoke only a step-by-step process towards standard international nuclear safety, including the safe disposal of nuclear waste. Nevertheless, specific obligations in this regard might be entered and later revised, without great difficulties, in binding protocols attached to the convention.

We share the view of the Director General that a framework convention of this kind may mark the beginning of a recognition that some standards and rules in the field of nuclear safety must be defined internationally and must be mandatory. Hungary also agrees with an approach which would at first include only basic rules and standards, to be expanded later as experience is gained. There is no doubt that substandard nuclear safety practices should not be accepted anywhere in the world.

(Mr. Erdos, Hungary)

Before concluding my statement, may I mention the extrabudgetary projects concerning the safety of first-generation water cooled and moderated reactors, carried out successfully by the Agency. We can agree that such projects ought to be coordinated more efficiently in the future, taking into consideration the positive experiences of countries which operate next-generation power plants from the same supplier. In view of the large number of initiatives in this field, it seems appropriate for us to establish a focal point within the framework of IAEA to concentrate the necessary information and relevant experience, as well as to determine the priority safety needs of the individual countries.

Finally, let me simply state that we gladly accept the Agency's annual report for 1990, and as an expression of our esteem for its valuable activities, we have readily joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

Mr. AKAEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I am addressing the Assembly today both as a member of the State Council of the USSR and as a Head of one of its Republics, the Republic of Kirghizstan. Therefore, I propose to dwell on two sets of issues. The first is related to monitoring the use of atomic energy and the second to maintaining and expanding cooperation between the sovereign Republics that used to make up the Soviet Union.

In real life these two groups of issues are closely interrelated and contingent upon each other in a unique and remarkable amalgam of human existence. A question may arise as to whether relations between the Soviet Republics have much to do with the United Nations agenda.

(Mr. Akaev, USSR)

In this connection, let me recall what Franklin D. Roosevelt said in Chicago on 5 October 1937. Prophetic indeed were his words, that isolation of the United States or any other nation from economic and political upheavals affecting any other part of the world could be fatal for everyone.

Politicians throughout the world and within the United Nations are wondering where the Soviet nuclear weapons and the entire USSR military machine will end up should the Republics fail to agree on a military and political union.

In fact, such fears are not unfounded. In his 1950 Nobel lecture, William Faulkner spoke of a tiny element which, dissolving into a deadly cloud, might strike the final hour on the clock of civilization. God forbid that we should ever see this warning come true.

Before turning to the subject-matter of my statement, it is my duty and privilege to make a brief comment on the United Nations activities at large, remembering that on 24 October we will be celebrating United Nations Day.

A thorough and comprehensive analysis of the changes happening in the world today will show that the role of the United Nations is obviously increasing. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar has rightly pointed out that the democratic transformations in the world, which started in 1985, largely on the initiative of President Mikhail Gorbachev, have brought the cold war to an end, and ended a period of stagnation as far as the United Nations is concerned, giving the Organization a new lease of life.

Indeed, the ending of the cold war has destroyed the bipolar configuration of the world which had crippled international relations for decades. It has released the Security Council from the grip of paralysis, bringing out the United Nations peacemaking potential.

(Mr. Akaev, USSR)

The forty-sixth session of the General Assembly has highlighted the international community's priorities for what may be called a post-confrontational stage in world development.

Three areas are of crucial importance: the maintenance of international peace and security; protection of human rights; and such global issues as disarmament, environmental protection and crime control.

We welcome the emerging consensus that on its long-term agenda the international community should map out specific areas which call for concerted action. We could not agree more with political leaders who say that the "democratic consensus" that has developed in the world must now be complemented with a genuine revolution in social fairness and economic development. In this context, we commend President Bush's idea of building a "pax universalis".

The Soviet delegation, which I am deeply honoured to represent, is satisfied with the statement made by the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Mr. Hans Blix. We would like to commend Mr. Blix for a document of traditionally high quality which fully reflects the extremely useful work done by an authoritative international organization.

The Republic of Kirghizstan follows very closely the activities of the IAEA. The uranium used in the first Soviet nuclear bombs and the first Soviet nuclear power stations came from our Republic.

I must also add that our Republic, together with the rest of the Soviet Union, highly appreciates the IAEA's efforts to monitor the Iraqi nuclear arsenal, pursuant to the relevant resolutions of the Security Council.

(Mr. Akaev, USSR)

The role of the IAEA in verifying the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons is becoming universally recognized. Today, the IAEA has become an effective guarantor of reductions in nuclear arsenals. We see the principal objectives in this area in globalizing the efforts to strengthen the non-proliferation regime, making the 1968 Treaty an accord of unlimited duration, and having the 1995 Review Conference legally confirm that status.

Some very promising trends have emerged in this area lately. Two nuclear Powers, France and China, have declared their intention to become parties to the non-proliferation Treaty. South Africa, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia have acceded to the Treaty.

(Mr. Akaev, USSR)

In an alarming contrast, the developments in the Gulf region stand out against the background of real progress in strengthening the non-proliferation regime. The Iraqi assault on Kuwait and the resolute action taken by the Security Council to thwart the aggression have made it possible for the IAEA Board of Governors to conclude, on the basis of the Agency's inspections in Iraq under Security Council resolution 687 (1991), that Iraq is not honouring its commitments under the agreement on IAEA safeguards. I am quite certain that these incidents do not indicate an inherent weakness in the IAEA safeguards but rather demonstrate the possibility of circumventing the system.

We note with satisfaction that the IAEA Director General considers that it is a matter of priority to increase the efficiency of safeguards and has begun preparing proposals to that end. The wealth of experience gained in implementing IAEA safeguards and the Agency's unique potential could also prove useful if used in the domain of fissionable materials. We urge that these issues be placed on the negotiating table without further delay.

As may be seen from the annual report, the Agency was generally successful in managing international cooperation in the field of peaceful uses of atomic energy during the period under review. Once again it has demonstrated its ability to respond promptly to the changing situation and to new challenges. Speaking about the peaceful uses of atomic energy, I cannot fail to mention with profound emotion and grief the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. Today, about five years after it struck vast areas of Belarus, Ukraine and Russia, this unprecedented disaster is still perceived as a symbol of human tragedy.

(Mr. Akaev, USSR)

The major objective of each sovereign republic is to reduce to a minimum the adverse effects of the disaster, within the integrated government programme for Chernobyl. Since May 1986 more than 25 billion roubles have been earmarked for the programme, which covers a wide range of issues. Our heartfelt gratitude goes to the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Perez de Cuellar, the United Nations Coordinator of International Cooperation for Chernobyl, Margaret Anstee, and also IAEA and other specialized agencies, for their efforts to mitigate the consequences of the disaster.

On behalf of the Soviet delegation, I should like to commend once more the IAEA report for 1990 and to go on record in support of the draft resolution.*

The second part of my statement will be devoted to the problems of a new Union of sovereign republics in the context of international security.

Prospects for a democratic and civilized world order are closely linked to future relations between sovereign republics, former constituents of the Soviet Union.

The world is going through amazing metamorphoses. For many years it was generally felt that the major threat to international security was a potential large-scale Soviet attack. Ironically, now that this danger has vanished into thin air, the major new threat to world peace is seen in the runaway disintegration of the social and political structures of the Soviet Union.

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* Mr. Pennaneach (Togo), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Akaev, USSR)

We have heard representatives of many countries stress that in the interests of stability and world order the new Soviet Union must remain a single subject of international law. They have said that a new, looser Soviet Union must nevertheless remain a federation. Regrettably, these observers tend to perceive events in the Soviet Union in an oversimplified manner.

In the meantime the sovereign republics, Kirghizstan in particular, are, in the words of the great Leo Tolstoy, reading the lifebook of worry, deception, misery and spite.

It is not for me, travelling outside my homeland, to anathematize communism with a Soviet face. We are all hostages to that inhumane ideology and its anti-human system. We all, in one way or another, must share the blame for our past. However, I must say that the defeat of what was the most heinous kind of totalitarianism in the history of mankind not only gave republics the joy of victory but also confronted those republics, including Kirghizstan, with economic, political and humanitarian challenges whose complexity has no precedent in post-war history.

Yet we, the people of the Republic of Kirghizstan, are lcoking to the future with optimism and trust. You may ask where it comes from. Well, it comes from the great sense of freedom we have won for ourselves. You have only to imagine the value of that freedom. Therefore, please understand me when I say that it often makes little sense for outside politicians to judge what kind of configuration our union should adopt. Let me share with you my own ideas in this respect.

The USSR as a State has, to all intents and purposes, ceased to exist. It was able to survive as long as it was propped up by the centralized party and government apparatus which controlled the military-industrial complex,

(Mr. Akaev, USSR)

the army and state security. Now that the centre has collapsed under the weight of crimes it committed against its own people, there is no holding back the will of the republics which have found their freedom in a bid for political and economic independence.

There is no bringing back the USSR as a State which rested on the foundations of the Russian empire. Any union of sovereign republics must now be based only on consensus about their vital interests. That consensus has already led to the signing of a Treaty on Economic Community. I am now praying that it may further result in the signing of a treaty on a defence union and a treaty on humanitarian cooperation between the sovereign republics. It is my firm belief that in the long-term security perspective the ideal solution for us, the sovereign republics, and for the rest of the world would be a confederation along the lines of the British Commonwealth.

Hence, all treaties among the sovereign republics must inherently be part of international law. It also follows that the issue of United Nations membership for the sovereign republics must be seen in a totally different light. Representatives of international organizations and of many Member States feel that in the present circumstances a request for United Nations membership from the Soviet republics, Kirghizstan in particular, would pose a real dilemma for the United Nations as well as its Members.

(Mr. Akaev, USSR)

The Heads of some Member States suggest that the entry of Soviet republics into the United Nations may cause a chain reaction in Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Canada and other countries. Others go so far as to say that such a course might raise the possibility of the states of this country, the United States, joining the United Nations as separate entities.

With all due respect I must say that such statements can mean only that their authors are not entirely familiar with the unique and highly dramatic situation, a situation dangerous for the rest of the world, that is developing in my long-suffering country.

I believe that the entry of Kirghizstan and many other sovereign republics into the United Nations would enable the world community to put to use for the maintenance of international security the mechanisms of the Organization that have stood the test of time. In that case, the great power of revived regionalism and the efforts of the United Nations could be pooled to secure peace on earth.

Mr. AMER (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (interpretation from Arabic): The delegation of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya would like to express its appreciation for the report made by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to the current session of the General Assembly, document GC/35/953. We should also like to express our satisfaction with the comprehensive statement made by Mr. Hans Blix, Director General of the Agency, on the Agency's activities in 1990. In view of the expanded nature of the Agency's activities and the diversified fields with which the Agency deals, we find it difficult to take up all activities and fields in this statement.

The IAEA performs a very prominent role in promoting cooperation in the fields of the peaceful applications of atomic energy, the safe use of this

(Mr. Amer, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

energy and the prevention of its proliferation and use for destructive purposes. Consequently, my delegation recognizes with appreciation the prominent performance of the Agency's technical assistance and cooperation programme, in particular in the areas of food, agriculture, mining, water resources, medicine, industry and others. We also extend our appreciation to the Agency for its symposia and seminars in nuclear applications for peaceful purposes.

One of the principal priorities of the Agency is the entrenchment of the concept of international cooperation in the fields of energy. This multi-purpose priority, in one of its aspects, is demonstrated in the Agency's response to the needs of the countries of the world, in particular the developing nations.

The Agency's task in contributing to the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes, especially in the areas of soil fertility, food preservation and insect and pest control, is a very important one. Like other members of the Agency, my country has benefited greatly from such activities.

Yesterday, we listened here in the General Assembly to Mr. Hans Blix' review of the activities of the Agency and its cooperation with other international organizations, especially in combating the screw worm fly in the territories of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and North Africa in the late 1980s. The technologies used in combating this dangerous worm have yielded successful results. As Mr. Blix stated in his introductory statement before this body, the damage caused by this pest in claiming the lives of over 12,000 heads of livestock in 1990, has been reduced this year to only six cases and after the first quarter there has not been one single case.

(Mr. Amer, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

Our delegation takes this opportunity to express its appreciation to the International Atomic Energy Agency and its Director General for their efforts to combat and control this pest. We would also like to express our gratitude to all international regional organizations that contributed to this effort and made it possible to end the threat posed by this dangerous worm. Studies have shown that had we failed the health of man and animal would have faced great danger not only in Libya and Africa but also in the Mediterranean and Europe.

In conclusion, I should also like to express our appreciation to the IAEA and declare our support for its efforts in promoting and strengthening international cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. We have clearly demonstrated our desire to cooperate with the Agency through our accession to the non-proliferation Treaty on 26 May 1975 and we are willing to do our utmost to support the Agency and to enhance its prestige.

Mr. HATANO (Japan): I am pleased to have this opportunity to state the views of my delegation on the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). I wish to begin by thanking the Director General, Mr. Hans Blix, for his statement, in which he ably described the report and clearly illustrated the Agency's tasks and priorities. There is no doubt that over a period of more than 30 years the Agency has been successfully fulfilling its important mission as a technical and universal organization for the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy while contributing to nuclear non-proliferation. Aware of this Agency's important role, my delegation wishes to reconfirm Japan's continued support for the Agency and its various

(Mr. Hatano, Japan)

programmes and activities in the development of peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Permit me now to present my Government's position on some important issues that are currently facing IAEA. First of all, I would like to mention that IAEA is confronted with a new challenge in the area of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. Iraq's clandestine activities, which are suspected of being related to the production of nuclear weapons, have been disclosed through on-site inspections by IAEA, based on Security Council resolution 687 (1991), following the Gulf War cease-fire. Iraq is, however, a party to the non-proliferation Treaty and has signed a full-scope safeguards agreement with IAEA.

(Mr. Hatano, Japan)

This violation by Iraq undermines the non-proliferation Treaty regime and betrays the trust of those Member States which adhere to their safeguards agreements and promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Japan believes that this violation by Iraq should be strongly condemned by the international community. This regrettable situation underscores the importance of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in the light of current international circumstances. Moreover, as Prime Minister Kaifu said in a statement to the United Nations disarmament conference held in Kyoto this June, we must recognize the need to enhance the effectiveness and credibility of the IAEA safeguards system. Japan considers it imperative to improve the system at the international level in order to ensure the effective and efficient implementation of the safeguards.

From the very beginning Japan has strictly limited its nuclear-related activities to peaceful purposes and has made the utmost effort towards securing non-proliferation. We welcome the important progress that has been made recently towards strengthening the non-proliferation Treaty regime. That South Africa and the front-line countries in Africa have signed the Treaty is a significant step forward. Furthermore, France and China, nuclear-weapon States which are not parties to the Treaty, now seem to be moving towards accession to it.

Japan continues to appeal to those Member States which are not parties to the Treaty to adhere to it as soon as possible. From the point of view of maintaining the reliability of the Treaty regime, it is quite regrettable that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea continually fails to fulfil its obligation - the acceptance of IAEA full-scope safeguards - although it has already signed the non-proliferation Treaty and is engaged in considerable

(Mr. Hatano, Japan)

nuclear-related activities. This affects the relationship of mutual trust among Member States, and it reduces the prestige of the Treaty, which a large number of countries have adhered to. Japan requests that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea take prompt action to put the agreement into effect - namely, to sign, ratify, and implement the agreement without any conditions and without further delay. In this respect, Japan wishes to express its regret that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has recently indicated its negative attitude towards signing the safeguard agreement with IAEA.

In conclusion, in the face of these new challenges Japan intends to play a positive role while continuing to contribute to IAEA's important technical cooperation efforts and also to its work in the field of nuclear safety.

Mr. MUNTEANU (Romania) (interpretation from French): I should like first to associate my delegation with the other delegations that have warmly thanked the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for his important statement on the activities of the Agency. The Romanian Government greatly appreciates the personal contribution of Mr. Hans Blix, and his tireless efforts to strengthen the Agency's role and its participation in solving the major problems confronting the international community, to enhance the Agency's contribution to the development of the peaceful uses of atomic energy for the benefit of member States, and to increase that body's international prestige.

Romania attaches particular importance to the Agency's work in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and international cooperation in that field. In this connection, Romania enjoys fruitful cooperation with various

(Mr. Munteanu, Romania)

countries, particularly Canada. We hope that an increased contribution to our programmes will be obtained through active cooperation with the Agency.

Among the Agency's programmes and activities Romania places the highest priority on those related to the enhancement of the safety of nuclear-power stations and other nuclear installations; the protection of personnel, the population and the environment; the effective implementation of a safeguards system for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons; assistance and technical cooperation in promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy; and research into and applications of nuclear techniques in socio-economic life. IAEA has become an indispensable part of the international system for cooperation and security in today's world in the fields I have just indicated.

Romania considers the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to be one of the pillars of international stability and security. As a party to that Treaty, my country complies fully and in good faith with the obligations it has assumed, and takes firm action to ensure that all the Treaty's objectives are carried out. We are convinced that the IAEA safeguards and effective verification measures are essential to the achievement of the objective of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. We consider that the safeguards system must be further strengthened and expanded to ensure that all the nuclear installations of non-nuclear-weapon States are subject to the Agency safeguards. Recently, important developments have occurred which can contribute to strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime, in particular, the adherence to the Treaty of Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe and, more recently, Lithuania; the decision of France and China to adhere to the Treaty; the intention expressed by some other countries to become parties to the Treaty; and the negotiations

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initiated by Argentina and Brazil with a view to concluding safeguards agreements with IAEA. We hope that the process designed to ensure the conclusion of a safeguards agreement between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and IAEA will soon achieve positive results. All these political acts, which should be welcomed by us all, are important steps towards the universality of the Treaty.

Deeply devoted to the aims of non-proliferation, the Romanian Government has recently taken supplementary legislative, institutional and practical steps to conform to the most rigid international standards for nuclear exports and to ensure their strict application.

(Mr. Munteanu, Romania)

For a year now my country has been participating in the Zangger Committee's activities. Romania has accepted the simplified procedures for the appointment of Agency inspectors. We support the Agency's implementation of provisions of the agreement in connection with unannounced and special inspections. We agree that there should be a system for universal notification to the Agency. Romania accepts and implements the principle of full-scope safeguards, which we think should become a basic rule of nuclear trade and cooperation.

The annual report of IAEA and the Director General's introductory statement give us a picture of the wide-ranging and productive activities in which the Agency is engaged despite the obvious financial constraints.

The Romanian Government is convinced that nuclear safety is essential to the peaceful utilization of nuclear energy. The establishment of the first nuclear-power station in Romania, with Canadian and Italian cooperation, is subject to continuous verification and supervision, in consultation with IAEA, to ensure that national and international standards are strictly adhered to.

It goes without saying that the improvement in international cooperation does not exempt countries from the responsibility of applying effective safety and radiological-protection measures within their own borders. Nuclear safety is a matter that concerns not only Member States that have nuclear-power stations but other countries as well - particularly those that are susceptible to the risks of transborder effects, as was demonstrated by the Chernobyl accident. In this connection we should like to thank the Director General of the Agency for his favourable treatment of the joint request made to him by the Romanian and Bulgarian Governments concerning multilateral, objective expertise with regard to safety at Bulgaria's Kozlodui nuclear-power station.

(Mr. Munteanu, Romania)

Still on the question of safety, I should like to indicate that the Romanian Government has initiated the procedure for becoming a party to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Matter, the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability in the Field of Nuclear Damage and the Joint Protocol relating to the Application of the Vienna Convention and the Paris Convention.

In his statement, Director General Blix emphasizes that this year has been particularly important for IAEA. There can be no doubt that the Agency's participation in the implementation of Security Council resolutions is one of the reasons for that assessment. As a non-permanent member of the Security Council, Romania participated in the preparation and adoption of the resolutions relating to the Gulf war and its aftermath, including those giving the IAEA a mandate in this respect. We appreciate the Agency's efforts and activities with a view to discharging its responsibilities under the relevant Security Council resolutions.

Romania is one of the sponsors of the draft resolution in document A/46/L.10 concerning the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

In conclusion, I wish to emphasize that the non-proliferation system and international concern about nuclear safety are of vital interest to the international community. The spirit of cooperation and the sense of the common good upon which IAEA is founded must prevail in the years ahead.

Mr. SOTIROV (Bulgaria): The Republic of Bulgaria has stated repeatedly that it attaches great importance to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) as a major world institution. We therefore are justifiably interested in the IAEA's latest report, which comes as further evidence of the significant and instrumental role of that organization in promoting peaceful nuclear activities while preventing the proliferation of

(Mr. Sotirov, Bulgaria)

nuclear weapons. I should like, on behalf of my Government, to avail myself of this opportunity to thank the Director General, Mr. Hans Blix, for his report. As can be seen from this report, the Agency is facing up to the new challenges posed by the current stage in international relations. In the new conditions, IAEA has clearly demonstrated its potential and ability to take effective action where such action is required.

Bulgaria values highly its cooperation with the Agency and the assistance it receives. A number of IAEA assessment missions have been received in my country to inspect the technological safety, assess the seismic characteristics, and monitor the seismic resistance of installations, as well as the condition of the equipment and staff at our nuclear-power plants, which account for more than 40 per cent of Bulgaria's power-generating capacity. That is why I should like to deal briefly with the situation in this field.

It is now known that the old VVR-440-type reactors are below modern safety standards. They are therefore the subject of serious concern and debate among experts and the general public. The mission of the Agency's operational safety review team (OSART), carried out in June this year, revealed a number of technical and organizational flaws, which, though not giving rise to immediate danger of an accident, are totally unacceptable if the consequences of a possible accident in the future are to be averted or mitigated.

The Bulgarian Government accepted in full the conclusions and recommendations made by the Agency's team and has taken swift and resolute action to eliminate the flaws that were found, regardless of the heavy strain that such action is putting on the national economy. Reactors numbers 1, 3

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and 4 were shut down immediately, and the closure of reactor number 2 is pending. Whether reactors numbers 1 and 2 remain in service at all will depend on whether they can be reconstructed and modernized. A series of urgent repair measures in the case of reactors numbers 3 and 4 have made it possible to put those reactors safely back on stream. Reactor number 5 - type VVR-1000 - which is operational, and reactor number 6, of the same type, which is due to come on stream shortly, were also inspected by a special IAEA team, which noted the good technical condition of the reactors and their smooth operation. None the less, we have since adopted a programme with a view to improving further the technical condition of these reactors. We hope that these programmes will be carried out with assistance from the World Bank.

A number of States - mainly Germany, the United States and Japan - as well as the World Association of Nuclear Operators (WANO), provided prompt financial and technical assistance to Bulgaria, with IAEA acting as an intermediary. We are deeply grateful for that assistance, which has been of decisive importance to our taking successful and competent action on the most urgent problems, as well as on the entire range of issues, especially in view of the extremely difficult transitional stage through which the Bulgarian economy is passing.

The Bulgarian Government fully supports the statement made by Mr. Hans Blix at the thirty-fifth session of the IAEA General Conference on the implementation of the VVR-440 project launched by the Agency. We note especially his remarks concerning the deep interest of other countries in the safety of such reactors and the need for international cooperation and assistance, under IAEA auspices, for countries operating such reactors.

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A nuclear accident, wherever it happens, is liable to have transboundary, even global, consequences. The Chernobyl tragedy made this all too painfully clear. Therefore, nowadays, international cooperation in this sphere has more than economic or techno-scientific importance; it has political and social significance also. Guided by these principles, Bulgaria now pursues a policy of complete openness on such matters and makes sure that the general public is informed accordingly. It was for this reason that Bulgaria joined the information system operated by the European Nuclear Society (NUCNET).

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The non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) has been successfully in force for over 20 years now. The practical results of the implementation of this legal instrument have proven its essential importance for maintaining peace and strengthening international security.

The nuclear-weapon States are taking steps in accordance with their obligations under the Treaty. We welcome the bold initiatives of the United States and the Soviet Union for significant reductions in their nuclear arsenals. China, France and the United Kingdom are contributing positively towards the strengthening of the Treaty. We note with satisfaction the decisions of Albania, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe to become parties to the NPT. Also of substantial importance is the fact that Argentina and Brazil are making positive changes in their national nuclear policies.

Against this background, Bulgaria fully supports the inspection activities carried out by the Agency, aimed at detecting violations by States of their commitments and obligations. Any such violation is liable to arouse the suspicion that nuclear material is being abused for the development and manufacture of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. My country supported the resolution adopted by the General Conference of the Agency at its thirty-fifth session dealing with Iraq's non-compliance with its obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and under the safeguards agreement signed between Iraq and the Agency.

Recent events, notably those related to threats to world peace and security, have once again highlighted the need for IAEA to direct its efforts towards establishing such procedures and mechanisms as would rule out the possibility of non-compliance. It is necessary to enhance further the

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safeguards system in order to prevent the abuse of nuclear energy for military purposes. We are glad to note that at its last General Conference the Agency adopted a resolution providing for such an upgrading of the safeguards system. In this connection, Bulgaria supports the Agency's efforts to conclude safeguards agreements with individual countries, especially those in politically sensitive areas such as the Korean peninsula and the Middle East.

Bulgaria, as a party to the non-proliferation Treaty, complies with IAEA safeguards in all its nuclear activities, which are exclusively for peaceful purposes. It has also brought its trade practices into conformity with the guiding principles of nuclear-related exportation and is an active participant in the process of updating export-control mechanisms related to nuclear materials, equipment and dual-purpose technologies.

The Agency's awareness of its great responsibility in promoting broad international cooperation and developing a comprehensive approach towards containing and mitigating the extremely dangerous consequences of a nuclear accident has led to the development and adoption of the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident, the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency, and the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. Bulgaria has signed and ratified all three Conventions and, on the basis of these Conventions, has signed bilateral agreements with a number of European countries. We deem it particularly important that these Conventions be signed and ratified by all States members of the Agency; only in that way can they become truly universal in scope and application.

My country appreciates and supports all of the activities carried out by IAEA. The Agency's exceptional contribution to ensuring the use of nuclear

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energy for peaceful purposes and for safer and more efficient use of nuclear power, and the highly competent, timely and invaluable assistance that it renders to its member States receive well-deserved acclaim from the international community.

Guided by these considerations, my delegation will vote in favour of draft resolution A/46/L.10, under General Assembly agenda item 14, sponsored by a large group of States.

Mr. OUDOVENKO (Ukraine): First I should like to express Ukraine's appreciation to the Director General, Mr. Hans Blix, and his staff for their outstanding contribution to the activities of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The delegation of Ukraine has studied the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency submitted for our consideration, which reflects the work of the Agency during the year covered by it. Ukraine, as a member of the Agency's Board of Governors, has played an active role in its activities aimed at the peaceful use of nuclear energy, the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the strengthening of cooperation in the field of nuclear and radiation security. We should like to note that these activities have taken place against the background of sweeping changes in the world and new approaches to urgent global problems.

The signing of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty between the Soviet Union and the United States was an event of historic impact and affirmed that an atmosphere of mutual responsibility for the solution of the global challenges faced by mankind has come into being. The latest proposal of President George Bush of the United States, supported by the leaders of the nuclear Powers, notably President Mikhail Gorbachev, and aimed at the

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liquidation of substantial stockpiles of tactical nuclear weapons, is a major step towards a more secure future. In Ukraine all initiatives that diminish the nuclear threat find whole-hearted support.

It would be appropriate to recall, in this connection, that according to the terms of the Declaration of Sovereignty of Ukraine and the Act of Proclamation of its Full Independence, Ukraine intends to pursue a policy of non-participation in military blocs and to adhere to the three following non-nuclear principles: not to accept, produce, or acquire nuclear weapons. The Agency secretariat is aware of the fact that we are ready to put under Agency control all nuclear installations in the territory of Ukraine.

The problem of nuclear non-proliferation acquires special importance today. Mr. Leonid M. Kravchuk, President of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, in his statement to the General Assembly of the United Nations at its current session reconfirmed that Ukraine stands for strengthening the non-proliferation regime and for converting the corresponding Treaty into an undated agreement. We welcome the accession to the Treaty of South Africa, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Lithuania and we also welcome the statements of China and France concerning their decisions in principle to adhere to the Treaty.

Ukraine intends to join the Treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons as a non-nuclear State. We support strengthening and further developing, on the basis of the Treaty, a corresponding international regime in which IAEA should play a special role.

The Agency report before us deals with the question of the Chernobyl catastrophe. It should be noted that the adoption by the General Assembly in 1990 of resolution 45/190, on international cooperation to address and

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mitigate the consequences of the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, promoted a consolidation of international efforts in this direction.

We should like to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Perez de Cuellar, and to Ms. Margaret Anstee, United Nations Coordinator on Chernobyl and Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna, for her efforts to ensure implementation of this resolution, to facilitate the convening of the United Nations Chernobyl Pledging Conference, and to work out the joint plan of international cooperation to address and mitigate the consequences of the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. Moreover, I should like to reconfirm that the Government of Ukraine is ready to extend its full support to the international community in order to bring this plan to life.

(Mr. Oudovenko, Ukraine)

We painfully feel the consequences of the tragedy that happened in April 1986 at the Chernobyl nuclear plant and affected, to a greater or lesser degree, several million people. The Ukrainian Government is implementing a large complex of measures aimed at mitigating the impact of radiation on people's health. But despite these measures, the situation in the affected areas remains extremely complicated and now the assistance of the international community in solving the Chernobyl problems is especially needed.

As indicated in the report, in 1990 the "Chernobyl Project" was implemented with the assistance of the Agency, and under that Project international experts determined radiation levels in a number of areas affected by the accident, examined the state of health of the population concerned and worked out recommendations on radiological protection.

Representatives of Ukraine had an opportunity to express their views on the outcome of the Project at the Conference in Vienna in May 1991, and then at the session of the Board of Governors of the IAEA, where Ukraine and Belarus made a relevant statement. Nevertheless today in this Hall we would like to reiterate Ukraine's position on this issue. First, we are grateful to the international experts for the professional way they dealt with the tasks they faced; we are also thankful to the secretariat of the IAEA for the efforts it made under the Project. At the same time we feel that because of the limited character of the Project's concept the experts did not obtain complete data, and that had a negative impact on their conclusions and recommendations and distorted, in our view, the real picture of the accident's consequences. The assessment did not cover the state of health of people from the 30km zone evacuated immediately after the accident, of the population living in the most affected areas and of the so-called liquidators.

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We are also concerned about an emerging tendency to explain the severity of the consequences of the accident by the social and economic difficulties of the population living in contaminated and evacuation areas.

We are convinced that the principal drawback of the Project was that its authors had not taken into account the interests of Ukraine as a member State of the Agency on whose territory the disaster happened. This resulted in a certain shifting of emphasis which Ukraine cannot accept. We proceed from the understanding that the work should be continued, with particular focus on a medical examination of people living in the most contaminated areas so that reliable data on the population's state of health can be obtained on the basis of a multifactor analysis as well as recommendations on measures aimed at its improvement. A valid forecast of future trends is necessary. We appreciate the Agency's willingness to move in this direction as expressed by Mr. Hans Blix in his statement yesterday at the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly. Ukraine for its part is prepared to provide all necessary data and equipment available for an examination of these issues and to cooperate most fully in implementing this task.

People have yet to learn the many lessons from the Chernobyl accident. The most important is how to prevent such disasters in future. To this end the Republic has taken certain measures: first, it was decided to freeze the construction of other nuclear plants and to close down the Chernobyl nuclear plant. But, in our opinion, the international community should also regard the Chernobyl accident as a lesson from which it is necessary to draw the proper conclusions.

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We are deeply concerned about the accident which occurred at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in August this year and about the new, major accident on 11 October 1991. The investigation will reveal who in particular is responsible for the sudden switching on of the Power Unit No. 2 generator which caused the explosion of hydrogen and a fire in the machine room roof. Fortunately for all of us that fire was localized within three and a half hours and there was no reported release of radioactivity beyond the building and the power plant site. Although member States which own nuclear power stations are primarily responsible for their safe operation, to our mind, the IAEA must pay more attention to the issues in order to reduce the probability of such accidents to a minimum or, even better, to avoid them altogether.

One of the Agency's statutory objectives is to use nuclear energy for the maintenance of peace, health and well-being throughout the world. We think that the Agency should persistently and without compromise implement its policy aimed at ensuring the safety of nuclear installations and making maximum efforts to attain this goal in practice. It is clearly evident that a new major accident at any nuclear power plant in any country would discredit the very idea of using nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Therefore, the development of fundamental, internationally recognized and mandatory standards of nuclear and radiation safety and the establishment of a coordinated programme of nuclear safety cooperation should become one of the major directions of the Agency's activities. Only a coordinated international policy in this area can ensure the highest degree of safety all over the world and allay doubts regarding nuclear energy.

It should be acknowledged that the Agency is already undertaking some efforts in this field. The international Conference on safety of nuclear

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power plants, "Strategy for the Future", held in Vienna from 2-6 September 1991, serves as an example of such activities. It was the first time that issues related to ensuring the safety of present and future generations of nuclear plants were discussed at such a high level. We think that the suggestions and recommendations put forward at that Conference deserve thorough examination. It is important that the Agency should determine its role and capabilities in implementing the suggestions put forward during that Conference.

The issues related to the safe operation of nuclear power plants are very important to us in view of the fact that on the territory of Ukraine there are five major nuclear power plants, including the ill-fated Chernobyl plant, the Rivne plant, which incidentally was visited by a group of Agency safety experts from 25-29 June this year, and other nuclear power plants with a total of 16 nuclear reactors having an overall capacity of 15 thousand megawatts, which accounts for 25 per cent of the entire generating capacity of Ukraine. Recently, the Ukrainian parliament - Verkhovna Rada - took a decision to declare Ukraine's jurisdiction over all state enterprises and organizations on the territory of the Republic previously run by the central federal ministries of the former Soviet Union. This decision fully applies to all five nuclear power plants. In fact we realize that such a transfer should in no way affect the operational safety of these installations. Certainly it will take some time to solve the number of legal, organizational and other issues resulting from the above-cited decision of the Ukrainian Parliament. The respective institutions to manage the operation of the national nuclear industry are being set up. In particular, the State Committee of Ukraine for the Safe Operation of Nuclear Plants has already been established.

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The Chernobyl zone is the result of a grave tragedy, but alongside this it is also a unique testing ground for the investigation of important physical, technical, biological and social problems related to eliminating the consequences of the nuclear accident and to ensuring radiological protection for the population. Today, of most crucial importance for us is the problem of the sarcophagus, or cover, of the destroyed fourth reactor of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. To solve this problem, the Government of Ukraine advanced a proposal to hold an international contest on how to convert the sarcophagus into an environmentally safe system, and requested all countries, organizations, scientific communities and individuals to participate in and to support the conduct of this contest. The appeal of the Government of Ukraine has been issued as an official document of the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly (A/46/579).

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The final disposal of the huge quantities of radioactive wastes resulting from the accident is another grave problem. We are certain that there is a need for an international project to develop optimal techniques for waste processing and disposal. Obviously, the Agency could play a part in solving these problems.

The information collected during the implementation of various Chernobyl-related projects is already available and will be made accessible to all. It will contribute in many ways to promoting nuclear and radiation safety and to developing measures that could reduce to a minimum the consequences of accidents at nuclear power plants in future - accidents which are extremely unlikely but, regrettably, possible.

The delegation of Ukraine takes a positive view of the activities of the International Atomic Energy Agency aimed at the implementation of safeguards, which are of special significance given the circumstances - that is, the evolving process of nuclear disarmament. At the same time, recent developments have demonstrated the need to increase the effectiveness of the existing safeguards systems. We consider it necessary to provide in the budget for 1993-1994 for specific measures to promote the special inspections. It is also necessary to develop a clear mechanism for carrying them out.

Our delegation welcomes the Agency's efforts in implementing Security Council resolution 687 (1991), particularly as regards the monitoring of Iraq's activities in the nuclear field. At the same time, we favour giving fresh impetus to the idea of establishing nuclear-free zones in the Middle East and of continuing efforts to draw all countries in the region into the

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Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and into accepting comprehensive Agency safeguards.

At the thirty-fifth session of the General Conference of the Agency, the delegation of Ukraine supported the Agency's programme and budget for 1992: in our opinion, they are well balanced. As regards the budget structure for the years to come, we believe it is necessary to conduct a comparative analysis of the results of various projects and determine certain priorities among them. That having been done, the expenditures for the most important projects could be increased in coming years while the financing of secondary projects might be reduced or even discontinued. We believe flexibility of this kind in financial policy would significantly promote the effectiveness of the Agency's activities.

An analysis of this kind is required to an even greater degree for the medium-term plan for 1993 to 1998, which reflects the strategy of the Agency's activities for the five-year period. The plan should provide for a possible redistribution of allocations in accordance with changing priorities, serve as guidance in developing the consequent programmes, and be regularly reviewed and updated on the basis of consultations between the Agency secretariat and member States.

In conclusion, I should like to emphasize that Ukraine supports the many and varied activities of the Agency aimed at strengthening international cooperation in the field of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and will in every possible way help to solve the extremely important tasks that are facing the organization.

Mr. RIDER (New Zealand): When the member States of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) assembled for the first General

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Conference, in 1957, I doubt whether anyone could envisage the complex set of challenges, technical and political, confronting the Agency today. In both his very comprehensive report to the General Assembly and in his statement yesterday, Director General Blix outlined the wide range of activities which have taken place over the past year. A major nuclear safety conference has been held to examine ways to improve standards of safety, radiological protection and waste management. The Agency has continued its work on technological cooperation, including that in a wide range of non-power applications of nuclear technology. Discussions have continued on its perimeters about nuclear trade. New countries have now joined the Agency.

This last year, and indeed recent weeks, have also seen significant positive trends which reinforce the regime for the prevention of the spread of nuclear explosive devices and for nuclear trade for peaceful purposes. The recent announcements by Presidents Bush and Gorbachev of significant reductions in nuclear arsenals open the way for a safer and more secure world. In addition to their arms-control value, these latest developments have an enormous political impact. The multilateral process, of which IAEA is a key part, has a major role to play in reinforcing the security and stability fostered by these historic steps.

As the Prime Minister of New Zealand, the Right Honourable J. B. Bolger, confirmed in the General Assembly last month, strengthening the non-proliferation regime is a priority for New Zealand. Now that the opportunities for creating a more peaceful world are greater than ever before, we simply cannot tolerate the possibility that further nuclear-weapon States may emerge.

(Mr. Rider, New Zealand)

The Gulf war has highlighted the importance of safeguards on the supply of nuclear technology. New Zealand welcomes the decisions announced last month by the Governments of the United Kingdom and France to make the adoption of full-scope safeguards a condition of nuclear supply. We believe this should be the norm for all suppliers of nuclear technology.

New Zealand also welcomes the decisions by a number of States, including France and China, to adhere to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. This means that all five nuclear-weapon States will soon be parties to the Treaty, providing a degree of support it has never before enjoyed. New Zealand hopes that other States which are not yet parties to the non-proliferation Treaty, and particularly those with major nuclear industries, will reconsider their position and show their firm support for international mechanisms to prevent the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction.

While nuclear safeguards agreements under the non-proliferation Treaty have been concluded quickly in at least one recent instance, it is discouraging to note the time it has taken for other countries to meet their obligations under the Treaty.

The continued operation by a party to the non-proliferation Treaty, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, of significant unsafeguarded nuclear facilities has raised serious issues. It is unacceptable for one party to use a bilateral dispute as an excuse for not honouring obligations it has undertaken in respect of all other parties. The longer this matter remains unresolved, the greater are anxieties about the nature of the nuclear programme involved. Clearly, the recent initiatives by the major

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nuclear-weapon States provide further impetus for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to sign and implement a safeguards agreement. We urge it to do so without further delay.

(Mr. Rider, New Zealand)

New Zealand is pleased to see that within its own region of the South-West Pacific a number of small countries with no significant nuclear activities have concluded safeguards agreements and chosen the simplified option of bringing them into force upon signature. Tuvalu recently signed a safeguards agreement with the Agency, Kiribati did so at the end of last year, and the Solomon Islands concluded such an agreement earlier this year. There are countries in other regions of the world with no significant nuclear activities which we would encourage to follow these examples. Unquestionably, the non-proliferation regime and the Agency's central position in underpinning it has received a welcome boost over the last year from further adherence to the NPT and the conclusion of NPT safeguards. But this stands in stark contrast to the conduct of NPT Party and Agency member, Iraq.

For the first time in the history of the Agency, its Board of Governors has found that a member State of the Agency and a Party to the NPT has not complied with its NPT safeguards agreement. This finding on Iraq's nuclear activities poses fundamental questions for the Agency and for the international non-proliferation regime. These need to be faced squarely. We must ensure that effective mechanisms exist to prevent a repetition of this non-compliance with an international safeguards agreement.

A vital role was ascribed to the Agency under Security Council resolution 687 (1991) in investigating Iraq's nuclear activities. A good deal of information has come to light since then about Iraq's nuclear programme. The Agency has operated under conditions that at times can only be described as difficult, as New Zealand, through its association with the United Nations Special Commission, well knows. We are accordingly pleased to sponsor draft resolution A/46/L.10 currently before us which, inter alia, commends the

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Agency for its efforts in implementing Security Council resolutions 687 (1991) and 707 (1991).

Substantial progress has been achieved in determining the thrust and scope of Iraq's nuclear activities. What has emerged so far is cause for grave concern. That a Party to the NPT could embark on such an extensive nuclear-weapon programme raises important issues regarding the existing IAEA safeguards regime. It is imperative that the safeguards system be strengthened to allow greater scope for detection of such clandestine activities. This will necessarily mean a more intrusive inspection system and a commitment by NPT States Parties to use the mechanisms that are already provided for this purpose. We are pleased that steps have already been taken in this direction. Nor should we lose sight of the proposals which emerged from the Fourth Review Conference on the NPT last year. New Zealand commends the Director General for his action in setting up a post-Fourth-Review-Conference task force to examine some of these proposals.

The safeguards regime is put to the test in other ways as well. In these times of zero real growth strains continue to be placed on the safeguards budget. The current safeguards financing regime does not seem well equipped to deal with the increased pressures on it. Informal consultations concerning safeguards financing have not achieved the progress we would have wished for in addressing some of the fundamental issues.

Strategies for the future was also the underlying theme of the international nuclear safety Conference which was held in Vienna earlier this year. The Conference acknowledged the constructive role of the Agency in contributing to nuclear safety, radiological protection and waste management. This is an area which impinges upon all regions of the world, including my own.

(Mr. Rider, New Zealand)

To conclude, these are unprecedented times for the Agency. In the foreground is the historic agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union to reduce strategic nuclear weapons, and the even more recent announcements on tactical weapons. There have been landmark changes in Europe. Yet we are confronted by the sobering fact of one Member State's aggression towards another and of its non-compliance with its international safeguards agreement, with all that this says about its nuclear ambitions. The system built up to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons has been challenged. The conclusion is clear. This is not a system we can do without.

Mr. KUKAN (Czechoslovakia): Last year's international developments have emphasized the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in preventing nuclear-weapon proliferation and the misuse of nuclear energy for military purposes. The Agency has been successful in its activities aimed at safeguarding the overall peaceful use of atomic energy benefiting the economic prosperity and health of the people of the whole world. The report submitted to us, as well as the statement of the Director General of the IAEA, Mr. Hans Blix, clearly demonstrate that the IAEA satisfactorily fulfilled its tasks in implementing these main goals and has been able to respond adequately to the difficult challenges it had to face.

The most dramatic of them for the IAEA was presented by the flagrant violations of obligations of safeguards agreement by a signatory with the IAEA - Iraq. In this respect, tasks were entrusted to the IAEA under Security Council resolutions 687 (1991) and 707 (1991). As has been clearly demonstrated, the Agency and its staff have been fulfilling their demanding duties under difficult and risky conditions with professional efficiency,

(Mr. Kukan, Czechoslovakia)

perseverance and self-sacrifice. Czechoslovakia highly appreciates these activities of the IAEA and is of the view that they should be continued in accordance with the decisions of the Security Council. At the same time, we appeal to the Iraqi Government to ensure all necessary conditions for the activities of the IAEA inspection teams.

The disclosure of secret uranium enrichment programmes in Iraq has dramatically manifested the urgent need to strengthen the IAEA safeguards system in a way which would guarantee that in the States which have adopted full safeguards there are no unnotified nuclear materials and equipment. We note with satisfaction that the thirty-fifth session of the General Conference reacted positively and promptly to this need, and by its resolution 999, adopted by consensus, has asked the Board of Governors to discuss measures on strengthening the efficiency of the safeguards system not later than February 1992.

The Czechoslovak delegation considers it desirable that the IAEA exert its right to carry out special inspections based on the safeguards agreements. We agree with the opinion of the Director General of the IAEA that to reveal secret nuclear activities through these inspections the following three main requirements must be met: information must be provided from other States - from satellites and various sources; quick and unrestricted access of inspectors to their locations; and Security Council support for such inspections.

(Mr. Kukan, Czechoslovakia)

Our experience with Iraq underlines the need for tightening control over the transfer, production or purchase of nuclear materials and equipment. In this respect we support the European Community's proposal for the implementation of a set of comparatively simple additional measures to be taken by all States. Moreover, all existing or potential suppliers of nuclear materials should adopt and consistently abide by the principle of making any new delivery conditional upon the commitment by the receiver to non-proliferation and to the granting of full safeguards. It is important that all major suppliers, and especially all permanent members of the Security Council, act in this way.

Remarkable and hopeful progress has been made in the past year in the growing number of the signatories to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which is a significant shift towards universality for that Treaty. We appreciate the accession of Albania and Lithuania and also of the group of African countries - Mozambique, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and finally South Africa - which has opened the way to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone on the African continent. We also welcome the decisions by France and China to accede to that Treaty. The implementation of the aforesaid steps would mean that all five nuclear Powers would become signatories to the Treaty, which would be of great importance for the regime of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

In view of the fact that nuclear safety is important to all States, it is desirable to strive to achieve universal acceptance of the non-proliferation Treaty. The Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, therefore, appeals once again to all States which have not yet acceded to that Treaty to do so as soon as possible.

(Mr. Kukan, Czechoslovakia)

In expanding the system of safeguards agreements with IAEA, on which the non-proliferation regime is based, minor progress was made last year. We expect the speedy signing, ratification and implementation of the agreement - the text of which was approved by the IAEA Board of Governors early in September of this year - by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. On the other hand, we appreciate the fact that the Republic of South Africa has already concluded such an agreement, and that it did so a very short time after it signed the non-proliferation Treaty. We are also expecting an early and successful conclusion of negotiations between IAEA on the one hand and Argentina and Brazil on the other on the signing of a safeguards agreement.

In the field of regional measures against the proliferation of nuclear weapons there has also been a positive development in the past year. We welcomed an agreement on such measures concluded between Argentina and Brazil. Resolution GC(XXXV)/RES/980, adopted at the thirty-fifth session of the IAEA General Conference, concerning the implementation of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East, should stimulate the adoption of measures to strengthen the regime of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, including the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in that region, which for decades has been afflicted by serious conflicts.

We appreciate the development of IAEA activities in the field of the safe peaceful uses of atomic energy, which has led, as pointed out by the Director General, to the international regime of nuclear safety and to a gradual strengthening of safety everywhere, including the safe disposal of nuclear waste. This regime of nuclear security should be strengthened in the forthcoming period through a gradual implementation of the conclusions of the conference on nuclear safety held by IAEA in Vienna last August.

(Mr. Kukan, Czechoslovakia)

In this respect, we especially appreciate the implementation of the project for the revision and increase of security of older types of nuclear reactors in Central and Eastern Europe, which is being completed. Also the IAEA activities aimed at the gradual establishment of safeguard criteria for designing future reactors deserve our recognition.

The decision of the Government of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic to provide a voluntary contribution to the United Nations Trust Fund in the amount of $US 500,000 was a manifestation of my country's full understanding of the need to mitigate the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster. We count on the participation of our enterprises and organizations in the United Nations projects which are being prepared and which will be financed from funds obtained at the Pledging Conference. The Czechoslovak Government has already provided humanitarian aid to children from the afflicted areas and has approved the resettlement of nearly one thousand of our fellow-countrymen from these regions to Czechoslovakia. This assistance has involved also supplies of medicine and food.

The Czechoslovak delegation has noted with satisfaction that IAEA has successfully taken up its duties arising from the new and immediate needs as well as from the long-term objectives. We especially appreciate the results it has achieved as an institutional barrier against nuclear-arms proliferation. We assure both the General Assembly and the Director General of IAEA, Mr. Blix, that the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic will continue to provide full support to the IAEA activities.

Mr. MONTERO (Chile) (interpretation from Spanish): First my delegation would like to state that we were pleased to read the comprehensive report of IAEA for 1990 and thank its Director General, Mr. Blix, for

(Mr. Montero, Chile)

submitting it to us yesterday. We associate ourselves with other representatives in paying a well-deserved tribute to the Agency for its sustained efforts for peace and international social and economic development of peoples, in the important field of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Accordingly, my delegation supports the draft resolution under consideration at this time and is very pleased to co-sponsor it, with the certainty that it will be adopted by the General Assembly.

I should like also to avail myself of this opportunity to express our satisfaction at the negotiation of a safeguards agreement between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and IAEA, within the context of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We hope that this important instrument for peace will be signed and ratified as soon as possible, in view of the important initiatives of understanding which can be undertaken in this connection and which enjoy the full support of my Government.

Mr. Chang Hee ROE (Republic of Korea): On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Korea, my delegation wishes to express its deep appreciation to Mr. Hans Blix, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), for his presentation of the annual report of the IAEA as well as for his comprehensive statement on the activities of the Agency.

We commend Mr. Blix and his staff for their untiring efforts, in particular during the course of last year, in undertaking and fulfilling the very important, yet daunting, tasks put before them.

We also firmly believe that the IAEA will continue to strengthen its pivotal role in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

During the two decades since our accession to the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the subsequent conclusion of the safeguards agreement with the IAEA, we have benefited greatly from the invaluable assistance provided by the Agency in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

As of last year, our country ranked as the ninth largest producer of nuclear energy in the world. Approximately 50 per cent of our electricity is generated by nuclear plants within my country. With such a strong dependence on nuclear energy, my Government attaches great importance to the ever growing cooperation between the Republic of Korea and the IAEA. As a member of the Board of Governors of the Agency, we are ever committed to the noble objectives of the Agency.

Today my delegation wishes to focus on nuclear non-proliferation and the safeguards regime, as the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the IAEA safeguards system are so vital for international security.

(Mr. Chang Hee Roe,
Republic of Korea)

As Mr. Blix elaborated in his statement yesterday, significant progress has recently been made in the field of non-proliferation. We welcome the fact that two declared nuclear-weapon States, France and the People's Republic of China, have announced their intention to accede to the Treaty. We are also gratified to note that several other non-nuclear-weapon States have recently joined or intend to join the NPT. These developments will mark an important step towards the achievement of universality of the NPT regime.

Since safeguards agreements are an integral part of the NPT regime, States parties to the NPT are obliged to conclude safeguards agreements incumbent upon them under the Treaty. Our particular concern lies with those countries which, despite being engaged in significant nuclear activities, have not yet signed the agreements.

This fact explains in large part my Government's preoccupation with one such State, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It is known that North Korea has for a considerable time been operating unsafeguarded nuclear facilities. The IAEA Board of Governors during its meeting last month expressed great concern over North Korea's long overdue conclusion of the safeguards agreement and it adopted a resolution that calls on North Korea to sign, ratify and fully implement the agreement.

Now that North Korea has become a Member of this world body, declaring its commitment to discharge the obligations under the Charter, and also because the text of the agreement has already been approved by the IAEA Board, we appeal to North Korea to fulfil its international obligations without further delay.

(Mr. Chang Hee Roe,
Republic of Korea)

As many delegations have noted on various occasions since the opening of the current session of the General Assembly, the Gulf crisis clearly highlighted the urgent need to strengthen further the safeguards system of the IAEA. We fully share with Mr. Blix the view that we should learn important lessons from our recent experience and that effective procedures must be put into place to prevent and, if necessary, meet any eventuality.

In this regard my delegation is very pleased to note the efforts already undertaken by the IAEA to devise measures intended to reinforce its nuclear safeguards system. In fact, the last session of the Board of Governors and the General Conference of the IAEA resolved to consider as a matter of priority ways to solve this problem.

In this connection we look forward with great expectation to the report of the Director General during the forthcoming session of the IAEA Board of Governors on the new mechanism of special inspection. We believe that that report could provide added momentum to this endeavour.

Mr. KHAN (Bangladesh): On behalf of the delegation of Bangladesh, I would like to convey our sincere appreciation of the efforts made by the Agency during the past year towards achieving its goal in respect of peaceful uses of nuclear energy for the benefit of mankind. My delegation also extends its felicitations to Mr. Hans Blix, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), who brought before us yesterday the difficult as well as delicate role the Agency had been performing under his leadership in a very difficult sector involving nuclear energy itself.

My country, as a member of the third world, has neither contributed to the nuclear stockpile in this world nor yet availed itself of the best fruits

(Mr. Khan, Bangladesh)

of this "power". We would none the less like to register our confidence in the International Atomic Energy Agency. Before going on to some details of the report as well as the role of the IAEA in the last decade of the twentieth century, I should also like to mention with respect the contribution made by IAEA in the activities related to the post-Chernobyl disaster and the contribution made in restoring confidence in the minds of the people that prescriptions of appropriate safeguards, coupled with timely and thorough inspection by international authorities and advice on nuclear waste disposal, could certainly lead to nuclear power devices that could ensure a safety level significantly higher than conventional power generation installations interpreted in terms of statistical estimates of probabilities.

(Mr. Khan, Bangladesh)

Bangladesh over the past two decades has been working in close collaboration with IAEA through the Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission. We have so far received some support in the training of our scientific manpower in respect of nuclear sciences. We are happy to add that research equipment and installations in Bangladesh have received IAEA support under the training and cooperation programme, which considerably benefited our young researchers as well as our research administration. The exchange of visits by scientific personnel and invitations to conferences and seminars supported by IAEA have all contributed to creating a congenial research atmosphere for nuclear scientists within a country which still maintains a rather low profile in science and technology, which are so vital for the development of a scientific base. On behalf of our delegation, I extend support for continuing work by IAEA aimed at achieving its goals of supporting developed as well as developing countries according to their needs in the arena of nuclear science. Without a doubt, the Agency has clearly demonstrated during the past year that its efforts designed to achieve peace and security through appropriate uses of nuclear technology can bring about useful cooperation among the nations of the world. In this respect, our delegation endorses the views expressed by the Australian delegation on training and development, with specific emphasis on developing countries.

Having said that with respect to the agenda of technical cooperation between nations through the auspices of the Agency, my delegation now wishes to make some specific references to the Agency's commendable work in the following areas: first, nuclear safety; secondly, nuclear power in the context of environment and development; and, thirdly, transfer of nuclear technology to developing countries.

(Mr. Khan, Bangladesh)

Nuclear safety has almost always been a concern for the big nations. Bangladesh was one of the countries caught unaware in the aftermath of the Chernobyl incident through its importation of baby food which had been contaminated as a consequence of that incident. New legislation had to be introduced to meet such an unexpected situation, but not before suspected damage had already been done to some of our young people who were dependent to a large extent on imported powdered milk. Thus, nuclear safety aspects had taken on an altogether new dimension for the world as a whole - not quite the same as the dimension of the management of the power plants themselves, which had been the conventional approach prior to our more recent experiences in this respect. By emphasizing its work in this field, the Agency has most successfully elucidated what an international agency can contribute in this respect.

The other delicate issue in respect of nuclear power which surfaced in recent times relates to the preservation of the environment for the sake of a healthy planet. We have already done considerable damage to our environment and ecology, and we have been talking quite loudly about the depletion of the ozone layer as well as the rise of the sea-water level and trends in global climatic changes. However, to ascribe all these changes or even to try to relate such events to nuclear-power plants alone would perhaps be an overstatement of fact. At this stage our delegation would like to draw the Assembly's attention to the fact that conscious or unintended efforts have been made in the past to intermingle the two issues of nuclear weaponry and nuclear power generation. While our stand on the question of nuclear weapons as well as on the limitation and destruction of stockpiles of such weapons remains absolutely clear, we would nevertheless, as one of the early

(Mr. Khan, Bangladesh)

signatories in our region of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, like to draw a clear line of distinction between the arms aspects and those related to power-generation possibilities in a developing country like ours, where virtually no conventional source of energy existed until some years ago - and even at present we have to contend with a limited supply of gas reserves. In addition, it is indeed time to point out emphatically that nuclear power is much cleaner than fossil fuels, as has aptly been argued by the Agency, and that environmental safeguards are much better ensured by the use of nuclear power when coupled with appropriate safety methods and when waste management is pursued by the Agency itself. The commitment to the large rural population in Bangladesh of necessary power supply and development could be ensured only through an introduction of nuclear power supplies if and when the current approach of conventional power sources fails to achieve the desired results. In such circumstances, we shall possibly be left with no other choice but to seek support from the Agency. We believe that a rational approach to the issue of power supply to large masses in the developing world has got to be taken up at one point or another, and we must realize that this is completely separate from the issue of nuclear weaponry. In other words, we frankly do not believe that arguments in favour of the elimination or destruction of nuclear weapons should stand in the way of the development of nuclear power in regions of mass shortage of formal energy sources.

Finally, our delegation would like to touch upon the subject of the transfer of nuclear technology and techniques for use for agricultural, medicinal and industrial purposes. The role of the Agency in this respect has been no less significant. Establishments have been set up in Bangladesh, including radioisotope centres for medical support, with the direct or

(Mr. Khan, Bangladesh)

indirect assistance of IAEA. Investigations related to detection of trace elements in agricultural and industrial products, irradiation of agricultural products relating to mutation and the development of newer species have all contributed to the development of an economically disadvantaged nation such as Bangladesh. As one of the least developed countries and as an early signatory of the non-proliferation Treaty in our region, we feel that we deserve special consideration and support of the IAEA programmes.

I myself, as a past member of the IAEA fellowship programme and as a continuing associate of the International Centre for Theoretical Physics - which is yet another institute under the constant and watchful support of IAEA as a means for raising the scientific and technological research capabilities of developing nations - would like to conclude by paying my compliments once again to the Agency for its selfless efforts in ensuring safety in the world through its pursuit of the peaceful uses of atomic energy.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I should like to inform the Assembly that the representatives of Egypt and Nigeria have asked to be allowed to participate in the debate on this item.

The list of speakers for this item was closed yesterday at 5 p.m. Hence, I must ask the Assembly if there is any objection to the inclusion of the names of those representatives on the list.

If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Assembly agrees to this addition.

It was so decided.

Mr. ADEKANYE (Nigeria): My delegation has carefully read through the annual report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for 1990, which in its quality and detail reflects the competence and expertise with which the General Assembly has come to associate the Agency. We commend the Director General for the report and for his lucid statement highlighting the activities of the Agency as well as the challenges ahead.

My country attaches great importance to international cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the positive impact of nuclear technology for development. In this connection, we note with satisfaction the growing effectiveness of the Agency in implementing its technical assistance programme for developing countries particularly in such critical areas as food and agriculture, mining and water resources, and medicine and industry. It is reassuring that Africa's share in the Agency's technical assistance programme witnessed an appreciable rise in the past year and that the overall disbursement of resources reflected the development priorities of our continent. We are also pleased to read in the report that the Agency stepped up its training programme and seminars on radiation protection in response to the needs of developing countries. The Agency's valuable assistance in these areas deserves to be increased.

A major instrument of IAEA assistance to developing countries is the Regional Cooperative Agreements established for Asia, Latin America and Africa. We are encouraged by the fact that, since it became operational in 1990, the African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training relating to Nuclear Science and Technology (AFRA) has continued to attract greater participation from our continent and the support of donor countries. More regional projects covering food preservation, irradiation

(Mr. Adekanye, Nigeria)

processing, use of radioisotopes in animal production, and plant mutation were identified at the second meeting of the Technical Working Group of AFRA at the Algiers meeting last July. We look forward to even greater activism in the coming months. It is also our hope that these and other projects will be expeditiously implemented and that the support of the international community for AFRA will be intensified.

The role of the IAEA in the area of safeguards is also adequately covered in the report. It is a role which is bound to grow as the Agency discharges its obligations under non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) safeguards agreements. My delegation wishes to reiterate Nigeria's support for measures that would strengthen the IAEA safeguards system. In this context, we have followed with interest the significant strides the Agency has made in the application of safeguards systems and the strengthening of the non-proliferation regime. We note in particular that prospects for non-proliferation in our region have brightened as a result of South Africa's accession to the NPT and its negotiation and signature of a safeguards agreement with the Agency. We recognize that this development could facilitate the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in our region in line with the 1964 Cairo Resolution of the Organization of African Unity. It is essential that the safeguards agreement be faithfully implemented under IAEA full-scope safeguards. We urge the international community to give the Director General the necessary support to ensure this.

Nigeria shares the widespread concern over the safety of nuclear installations worldwide. We therefore welcome the expansion of the Agency's programme on nuclear safety and commend it for the imagination and initiative the secretariat has shown in the matter. In this regard, we note that the

(Mr. Adekanye, Nigeria)

Agency organized an International Conference on the Safety of Nuclear Power Strategy for the Future in Vienna in early September this year. The conclusions of the Conference constitute an important contribution to the search for an international nuclear-safety regime that addresses these concerns. We urge all States to redouble their efforts to ensure that all installations worldwide are indeed safe and well regulated, and pose no danger to human health and the human environment.

Permit me to turn to the issue of transboundary movement of radioactive waste. As an active participant in the discussions that resulted in the adoption of the Code of Practice on the Transboundary Movement of Radioactive Waste, Nigeria views the effective implementation of the Code as of primary importance in protecting developing countries from the dumping of radioactive wastes and toxic materials on their territories. We should not allow the gains the international community has made on the matter to be reversed. On the contrary, we should make the Code the cornerstone of a new convention to control the transboundary movement of radioactive waste.

In conclusion, my delegation considers that the Agency has performed remarkably well in the past year and, in so doing, has reinforced the confidence of the overwhelming majority of its member States in its functions. Its role in strengthening the non-proliferation regime has been reinforced, and its capacity to respond to the challenges of member States, particularly developing countries, on nuclear energy for peaceful purposes demonstrated. It has risen to these challenges in circumstances of a zero-growth budget.

(Mr. Adekanye, Nigeria)

These challenges will grow. They demand more, not fewer resources. My delegation has no doubt that, given such additional resources, the Agency would indeed meet the rising expectations of its members. It is our hope that the political will to address this issue will match the expression of support which the report has received from delegations. With these brief remarks, my delegation supports the draft resolution on the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency contained in document A/46/L.10.

Mr. ELARABY (Egypt) (interpretation from Arabic): At the outset, I should like to express my delegation's appreciation to Mr. Hans Blix, the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), for his statement on the Agency's activities in 1990, as contained in the Agency's report.

On this occasion the delegation of Egypt would like to reiterate its support for the important role performed by the IAEA in consolidating the non-proliferation regime. It is a role that is indispensable for the achievement of the objective after which we all aspire, namely the elimination of the grave dangers that continue to threaten the international community as a whole. This makes it imperative for us all to pursue our efforts to remove all destructive nuclear capabilities.

(Mr. Elaraby, Egypt)

At the same time, Egypt urges support for the Agency in the performance of its role, especially now, given the current positive developments in international relations which indicate that it will be possible to achieve concrete progress in this respect at a time when we are about to consider the future of the non-proliferation Treaty.

By the same token, Egypt welcomes the two resolutions adopted by the General Conference of the Agency at its session this year concerning the comprehensive application of the safeguards regime to all nuclear installations in the Middle East as well as to South Africa's nuclear installations. We hope to see more practical steps being taken to strengthen the Agency's role in this respect. Egypt calls upon all countries in general, and in particular upon those countries of the Middle East which have not yet placed all their nuclear installations under the Agency's safeguards regime - to hasten and rectify this situation so that they may remove the ambiguity which surrounds their nuclear programmes and which can lead only to loss of confidence in the truthfulness of the peaceful nature of their intentions.

The Agency has demonstrated this year that it is capable of discharging the tasks that the Security Council entrusted to it within its mandate to monitor the implementation of the obligations under the non-proliferation Treaty with a view to ensuring the achievement of the Treaty's objectives. On the other hand, the Agency can make a positive contribution to the elimination from the Middle East of all types of weapons of mass destruction. This is a principle that the Security Council has already endorsed very clearly, and which we are trying in earnest to implement as soon as possible in order to defuse tension in our region, which has suffered from conflicts and instability for far too long.

(Mr. Elaraby, Egypt)

I should like to express full appreciation of the Agency's active role in cooperating with developing countries in the peaceful applications of nuclear energy. Developing countries must make use of this important source of energy if they are to develop their economies and achieve prosperity for their peoples. The Agency's important activity in this respect demonstrates the feasibility of fruitful cooperation in the field of the peaceful application of nuclear energy in the service of lofty goals which we must strive after.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): At the request of a number of delegations, the vote on draft resolution A/46/L.10 is postponed until tomorrow afternoon. An amendment submitted by Iraq has been distributed this morning as document A/46/L.12. Members should note the following corrections: the text proposed by Iraq does not replace paragraph 4; it constitutes a new paragraph. The remaining paragraphs should thus be renumbered.

The resolution GC(XXXIV)/RES/570 mentioned in the Iraqi amendment refers to a resolution of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

I shall now call on the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, who wishes to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

May I remind members that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. KIM (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): I wish to refer to the statements made by the representatives of Australia, Japan and South Korea. I should like to remind those representatives that on 2 October, in

(Mr. Kim, Democratic People's Republic of Korea)

this very Hall, the Premier of the Administrative Council of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea stated clearly our stand on this issue. We have stated on several occasions that we do not have any intention of developing, or the capability to develop, nuclear weapons. We acceded to the non-proliferation Treaty in the expectation that with the help of the Treaty we would be able to rid ourselves of the constant nuclear threat against us.

In July this year we approved the text of the IAEA safeguards agreement, hoping that the United States would take corresponding steps to comply with its obligations under the Treaty. To our great disappointment, however, at the September meeting of the IAEA Board of Governors some countries, including Australia and Japan, forced the adoption of a resolution whose sole purpose is to impair our dignity and impose international pressure upon us, thus creating an artificial barrier to our intended conclusion of the safeguards agreement.

Previously the normal procedure of the Board of Governors was to approve the agreed text. On this occasion, however, an additional clause was included for the purpose of putting pressure on us.

The conclusion of agreements is a matter that lies within the sovereignty of each country. My country is small and it regards independence and sovereignty as a matter of life and death. Hence, it is difficult for us to conclude any agreement under pressure that is designed to undermine our sovereignty.

My country is the only one in the world that is under constant nuclear threat. We do not attach conditions to the signing of the safeguards agreement, but we ask a nuclear-weapon State to discharge its obligations under the Treaty. If Australia and Japan are to make any positive

(Mr. Kim, Democratic People's Republic of Korea)

contribution on this issue they will have to adopt an unbiased stand. As for the South Korean representative, he is not qualified to speak about the subject. Up to now, the authorities of South Korea have said that there are no nuclear weapons in South Korea. But, as is now widely known, nuclear weapons of the United States are deployed there. The provision of sites for the deployment of nuclear weapons capable of destroying our nation is against the interests of that nation. I hope that they will accept responsibility and feel some shame for their anti-national conduct.

It has now been confirmed that there are nuclear weapons in South Korea. The withdrawal of all those weapons and the removal of the nuclear threat against us constitute the prerequisite for solution of the safeguards agreement problem. We take note of the recent commitment of the United States with regard to the removal of nuclear weapons, and we hope to see the early withdrawal of all such weapons deployed in South Korea.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.